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# THE AMERICAN JOURNAL OF NURSING

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## THE TWELFTH ANNUAL CONVENTION OF THE AMERICAN SOCIETY OF SUPERINTENDENTS OF TRAINING-SCHOOLS FOR NURSES

NEW YORK, April 25, 26, 27, 1906

### ADDRESS OF WELCOME BY THE HONORABLE SETH LOW

I LOOK upon it as a very great privilege and honor to be permitted to come here this morning to extend to you the welcome of the people of the City of New York. I wish that you could gather from the tones of my voice some echo of the gratitude of the many sick and injured in the city, in whose interest and on whose behalf you are here. I wish that some note of appreciation on the part of the multitudes of friends of those who are sick and injured, and have been sick and injured, would sound through my voice into your ears, and tell you how very welcome you are. The late Mr. Travers, who had the infirmity of stuttering, is reported to have been asked one day by a friend why it was that he stuttered so much more in New York than in Baltimore, where he at one time lived. Mr. Travers replied, that he thought perhaps because it was a bigger city. That was a whimsical enough opinion to apply to such a subject, but it is because New York is so great a city that you are so very welcome. Here you really get the welcome of four millions of people; it is rather overwhelming you may think, but I do believe that the very multitude of those who greet you through me should be an inspiration to you in all your work.

Everyone who knows anything about such matters, appreciates that the trained nurse is the product of the Training-School for Nurses, and everyone who knows anything about the conditions of administration in such an institution, understands the perfectly vital relation of the superintendent to the success of the training-school. I often think, and some-

times say, that the whole secret of making anything successful is to get the right person at the head, and precisely as an army needs to be well led to accomplish its best result, so with any other work whether it is of a university, whether of a hospital, or whether of a training-school, for success there must be at the head a Christian, a competent person, and a person with business ability. These complements in the work you are doing are the requisites of success. There is a great deal besides, naturally, which ministers to success in any enterprise. Of course, it is perfectly apparent that the trained nurse could not exist without the training-school. The question I want to develop is the question of training. There has been a belief I think, in every walk of life, that the way to learn how to manage, how to excel in that occupation, is through practice. I remember perfectly well when it was believed that the only way to learn law was to study in a law office. When law schools were first proposed, they were scoffed at. I remember that when the School of Mines at Columbia was established in 1864, many ridiculed it and said that the only way to be a mining engineer was to work in the mines, and yet it is the mining engineer, trained in the schools of the country, who has revolutionized mining in all its branches. What is true of the law, of mining, and of medicine, is just as true of the art of nursing. I think that is now past discussion, and it is just as true for those who are to have the special duties of superintendent of training-schools, as it is possible to learn by a course of study, many of the principles of which have to be applied by practice. Now I am not proposing that there should be such classes in the training-schools for superintendents. I have no doubt in the training-schools themselves they learn a very large part of what it is necessary they should know, but it was my good fortune to be the President of Columbia University when this Association arranged for the course for superintendents of training-schools which has since been maintained in the Teachers' College of that University. The idea commended itself to me very heartily at the time, and I did everything I could to secure the establishing of the course. Because I refer to it now I am not in any way speaking for that course in particular. That is only the type of what ought to be done in all the universities that are sufficiently well equipped to undertake such work, but I do think there are things to be learned by superintendents in the course of a year or two of study that it may be found very difficult to learn at all in the practical administration of a superintendent's work, or which could be learned in that field without the expenditure of time and labor, and perhaps at the expense of others. Every practitioner gets his wisdom through experience, and that experience is often contrib-

uted to by those upon whom they practise. But I do think that there is something to be learned about the art of teaching by anyone who has to teach. It is not many years ago that there was very little attention paid in colleges to the art of teaching the best methods of instruction for children of a given age, or adults, and yet that idea has, in the last ten years, obtained a very strong foothold in the world of higher education. Almost every large university has its training-school for teachers; of course you have a training-school for nurses. The point I want to bring out is my own belief, partial or incomplete as it may be, that there is something of benefit to those who are to superintend such schools to be had out of such courses, and I hope that this Association will not only continue to support that course, but that it will throw its great influence in favor of the provision for such courses in all parts of the country, where they are at all possible or desirable. I speak of it without knowing what may be the views of those present, though I suppose you will be in harmony with what I have been trying to say. I know so well what the atmosphere is outside among people who have not been brought closely in contact with the subject. The precise thing is that such a course would be invaluable to the superintendent, and I am perfectly sure that the more perfectly the superintendent understands the fields of the questions that are involved in good teaching, the much more competent she will be to administer a training-school along the wisest lines.

In speaking as I have, I feel sure that my words will assure you, in some small measure at least, how profoundly I sympathize with every feature of your occupation. The trained nurses and superintendents of training-schools seem to me almost the finished product of the nineteenth century, and we, who are charged with the duty of transmitting that gift through the centuries to come, are also charged with the duties of improving it.

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## ADDRESS OF THE PRESIDENT

ANNIE W. GOODRICH

New York Hospital

As we realize that from the little band of eighteen women who, twelve years ago, founded this Society, we have to-day become a body with a membership roll rapidly approaching three hundred, representing schools of nursing and hospitals all over these United States and Canada, who are sending out yearly, to the many and varied fields of labor that now await the professional nurse, thousands of graduates, we must realize